

I currently own a digital TV, which was rather expensive. I don't want a law passed that will make my TV obsolete, and require me to buy a new one, simply because the existing one does not include copy protection technology. But that's just a start.

Currently, all my audio/video equipment consists of components, instead of a grand unified system. I do not want any laws requiring integration between components. For example, I could buy a new digital TV tuner with copy protection, and send the output to my TV. While this would be a relatively cheap upgrade, it would not work for copy protection because the content would be unprotected between the tuner and the TV. Likewise, digital audio content would be unprotected between the tuner and preamplifier. Presumably equipment like my DVD player, X-Box, and Playstation 2 (all of which can play DVDs), would all need this same technology.

So beyond my TV, you're asking me to replace essentially all my AV equipment (let's not even start with computers!) with new equipment. And the safest way is to integrate it all into one box, which I also disapprove of. And since no sane person would pay for all these upgrades, or for the additional copy protection in each box, you're going to require it by law.

Now, let's consider the effectiveness of this law. All equipment sold to consumers in the US would be protected. Will it really stop piracy? Are consumers in the US really the pirates? Will no one (in Asia, perhaps) create and/or buy a bootleg device which allows you to decode protected content and send a pure digital signal to a recording device? Witness the number of cable TV descramblers for sale in the back of many popular magazines. Recall that DVD copy protection was broken by a teenager, if I recall correctly before the number of DVD players on the market had surpassed the number of VCRs. Recall that mod chips have been developed to defeat the copy protection feature of every game console on the market. Recall that it only takes one such device anywhere in the world, and thanks to the internet, the content can be permanently distributed in pure digital format. The only way to prevent that is to require that no device accept \*unprotected\* content, which means that home videos and digital camera pictures and personal and amateur content of all varieties is completely eliminated, not to mention content from all non-US providers (clearly unacceptable).

So it seems that this legislation would not only cut down on consumer choice, require wholesale upgrades of just about every bit of consumer electronics in homes today, and require consumers to pay for additional unwanted features in every device on the market, but it also is unlikely to prevent piracy to any significant degree.

In the end, you are asking consumers to foot the bill (to a massive degree) because content providers cannot update their business models to accommodate modern technology. The same issues were raised when technologies like VCRs and CDs were first brought to market, and at the time the arguments were wisely rejected. When content providers adjusted their business models, the results were massive windfalls for them (witness the amount of money brought in by CD sales or video tape sales and rentals). Please do not legislate a stoppage of time, freezing today's business models in place forever. Instead, let's embrace the future, keep technology open, and find new business models that satisfy

both consumers and content providers.